



From the office of **State Controller Kathy Augustine**

PRESS RELEASE

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\$4 MILLION PAID TO NEVADA THROUGH STATE CONTROLLER'S DEBT COLLECTION PROGRAM *Additional State Agencies Contract for Controller's Debt Collection Services*

Carson City, NV. May 10, 2005. State Controller Kathy Augustine announced today her office has collected over \$4 million in past due receivables owed the State of Nevada through her aggressive debt collection program.

The State Controller's Office is authorized to act as the centralized point of collection for the state, however it can only collect debt voluntarily referred by a state agency. Currently, 23 state agencies, boards and commissions have contracted with the State Controller's Office for debt collection services. There is no fee or cost to the agencies for the Controller's Office services.

Most recently, the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (W.I.C.H.E) contracted with the State Controller's Office for debt collection services. W.I.C.H.E. has turned over for collection several accounts resulting from defaulted student loans and the Controller's Office has already started receiving payments on that debt.

During the last legislative session the Controller's Office added another tool to aid the debt collection program. A uniform statewide returned check fee of \$25 for non-sufficient funds checks written to the state was put into effect. The State Controller's Office is currently seeking legislation through Senate Bill 112 that would extend the non-sufficient funds fee to any method of payment returned or otherwise dishonored, including credit card and electronic payments. This statutory change, if passed, would provide the State a way of recouping associated costs when credit card and electronic payments are returned.

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